



MEETING SUMMARY

CALIFORNIA WATER PLAN UPDATE 2013
DISADVANTAGED (DAC)-ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE (EJ) CAUCUS SESSION
9:00 –11:30 A.M.
CALEMA HEADQUARTERS
3650 SCHRIEVER AVENUE MATHER, CA

Meeting Objectives

1. Recap objectives and workplan for DAC-EJ Caucus
2. Obtain input on updating the report on “Californians without Safe Water”
3. Discuss efforts to date for the Progress Report

Welcome, Introductions and Agenda Review

Lisa Beutler, Executive Facilitator, reviewed the agenda for the caucus session, noting that the caucuses will be involved in developing – and finding a home for – content on different topics. Caucus members will also be reviewing and commenting on key Water Plan Update 2013 deliverables. As an example, the draft Assumptions and Estimates report will be publicly released at the end of April. This technical guide for the Water Plan will be shared with caucuses, providing an opportunity for reviewers to share information on data and methods that may need to be included in the report.

Another interim deliverable is the Progress Report that will look at how well the State is doing in terms of implementing the recommendations from Update 2009. Caucuses will have a major role in evaluating the current status of objectives and related actions. This will feed into discussions on Goals and Objectives for Update 2013, which will be featured at the 2012 Plenary in September.

Ms. Beutler reviewed the agenda for the DAC-EJ caucus session and introductions were made around the room.

Overview of the DAC-EJ Caucus and Basic Workplan

Maria Kennedy is the co-chair for the DAC-EJ Caucus. Newly established for Update 2013, Ms. Kennedy briefly reviewed the Caucus charter and work plan, seeking input on suggested changes. She emphasized the importance of having a place at the table for DAC-EJ, noting that the State is only as strong as the weakest link. Strengthening the weak links will strengthen the entire State.

The charter and work plan identify several activities, including coordination and review associated with other Water Plan venues to enhance representation of DAC-EJ perspectives. This includes DAC-EJ involvement with Regional Forums, Finance Plan activities and content



relating to the Tribal Advisory Committee, other caucuses and Resource Management Strategies (RMSs). Ms. Kennedy also touched on several key deliverables for the DAC-EJ Caucus:

- Development of a DAC Outreach Handbook to assist entities in reaching out to DAC-EJ communities. This reference document will be similar to the Tribal Communication Plan in providing best practices when working with communities.
- Tracking key legislative and regulatory proposals, with an emphasis on EJ, and surfacing leverage points with Update 2013.
- Creating a directory of DAC-EJ contacts, by region.
- Identifying and collaborating with State programs that provide financial and technical assistance to DAC-EJ communities
- Updating the 2005 report “Californians with Safe Water.”

Membership on the DAC-EJ Caucus is open and a list of invited DAC-EJ Caucus members was provided for reference. For those who are interested in participating on the DAC-EJ Caucus, there will be options to serve on small teams to help develop proposals and initial work projects as well as review initial drafts of key deliverables. Caucus sessions will use a flexible conference call and webex format.

Discussion

Comment: The alignment of DAC and EJ issues and concerns needs to be clearly called out.

There are economic disadvantages and disproportionate impacts. There are also obstacles in terms of being able to participate – meetings may have consequences for communities but the meeting locations often make it difficult for community members to participate.

Response: Debbie Davis, OPR, remarked that when EJ language was developed for inclusion in statute, there was a focus on economic indicators. It would be helpful for the caucus to consider whether there are better options for screening the concepts of EJ and DAC.

Overview of “Californians without Safe Water” Report

Jose Alarcon, DWR, Water Quality Lead, introduced the handout materials including the 2005 report “Californians with Safe Water” and proposed outline for updating the report. Mr. Alarcon highlighted the changes for the Update 2013 revision:

- Sections 1, 2 and 3 of the 2005 documents would be condensed into one section
- A new section is proposed for describing “Progress and Challenges 2001 to 2011”
- A new section is proposed for “An Action Plan to Achieve Clean, Safe Water for all Californians”

It was noted that by incorporating an action plan, the report will more closely reflect the format of the Water Plan Resource Management Strategies (RMSs). The action planning will emphasize integrated activities that will need to occur at the statewide level to benefit DACs, and will connect to the Progress Report and performance indicators.



The timeline for revising the report includes an initial draft by July 2012, which will be reviewed by DAC-EJ Caucus members, then edited and sent for another round of review at the Water Plan Plenary in September 2012, with public release in the fall. The contact information for the report leads are as follows: Debbie Davis, OPR, debbie.davis@opr.ca.gov, and Jose Alarcon, DWR, jalarcon@water.ca.gov.

Discussion

Defining Need

Question: Will the discussion on need be general or will information be provided on the watershed and the water resources available to DACs? (For example, will there be information about public v. private water purveyors, costs and infrastructure conditions? Is there enough data to describe the need?)

Response: Jose explained that the description will be more general in nature and will draw on existing reports. Debbie Davis added that while the report will present the statewide perspective, additional detail can be provided in the Regional Reports. References and resources are needed to develop text for the regional reports, and the “Californians without Safe Drinking Water” report can point to the those more detailed descriptions.

Comment: The description of need should inform the readers, the State and stakeholders about where investments are needed.

Response: The report revision is looking to describe the progress that has been made in this area, as well as develop recommendations and suggest further action. Other State plans, including the Drinking Water Program by the Department of Public Health, will be cross-referenced and involved in revising the report.

Comment: Generalities need detail to explain current conditions. It would be helpful to refresh the quantification already in the 2005 report and to compare time periods. For definitions regarding geographic or economic aspects of underserved communities, the DPH “troubled systems” list provides information regarding public and private systems.

Comment: There is much to be gained by providing greater detail to the problem and explaining why water is an issue for DACs. Health statistics will help tell the story. Being explicit about the problem will help inform and justify investments.

Comment: There are environmental injustices outside DACs and Tribal. When a DAC is being included into statistics – there needs to be a discussion of the basis for determining status (e.g. economic), there is significant variation among DACs and Tribes in terms of communities, types of challenges and level of unmet need. That variation should be recognized and inform State investment. Look at the amount of water is actually needed and compare it to how much is actually produced or treated. Look at other benefits as well. Incorporate a broader assessment of need that moves the report towards looking for solutions.



Comment: It would be helpful to show where the communities without safe water are located and to map that. The resulting map could then serve as a baseline, which would hopefully demonstrate progress in the future.

Comment: It would be helpful to keep the list of deficiencies as an appendix rather than in text.

Affordability and Value of Water

There was a discussion on the need to address affordability – that clean and safe water supplies must be affordable. Mr. Alarcon noted that an important component for Section 2, on meeting community needs, is highlighting those systems that can't cover operation and maintenance (O & M) costs.

A suggestion was made to address the broader perspective on the value of water. Often, water is undervalued and it would be beneficial to bring that element into the discussion – and recognize that most people are getting a pretty good deal on water.

The price of water bumps up against affordability and there are only two options: customer pays or grant assistance. Readers need to be provoked to think about this. Programs aren't able to address infrastructure, cleanup and data collection because water is undervalued.

Other economic considerations include:

- Retention of treatment plant operators – operators generally move up and get licenses, then move to another facility for better pay.
- How to pay for technical assistance, so that DACs can apply for grants.
- Addressing match requirements associated with some financial assistance programs.
- Better strategies to empower DACs in jobs creation.
- Training and education to DACs to create sustainable systems.
- Try to quantify the costs of not providing water to these communities (disease, other impacts that can be economically defined)
- Include something on potential models and mechanisms to address affordability. Look at life-line rate potential and develop some recommendations on that issue.

Audiences

There was a comment that understanding the intended audiences will inform the appropriate content for each document. It was noted that the Californians without Safe Water report is targeted to State agencies and those with authority for water management. The 48 water management groups, and associated policy-makers, represent another audience.



Capacity Building

Capacity is a huge issue for DACs. These communities not only face economic disadvantages, there are disadvantages and hurdles in trying to obtain financial support. Often, technical support is needed just to submit a grant application. Submission requirements can include several years of financial statements and establishing or maintaining a governance structure for administering the grant. Remote communities have location as an additional challenge, where there is no nearby infrastructure that can be leveraged. And, as noted previously, grant funding provides for construction costs for infrastructure. Communities face challenges in meeting O & M costs, which need to be accounted for in creating long-term sustainable systems.

It was suggested that there should be a companion document for DACs, explaining how to become involved in other planning processes. DACs need tools for how to improve conditions.

Data

The discussion around data, including data sources and data sharing, involved several different aspects. One topic focused on data gaps and the lack of comprehensive information regarding groundwater levels and groundwater quality – especially for private wells. Part of the discussion on data includes increasing the efficiency in utilizing data that is already available. Data transparency and standardization and integration of data sets will increase efficiency. Geotracker was suggested as a one-stop data resource.

Monitoring data is invaluable to develop reports. It was noted that, through CASGEM, the State's role in collecting data is being passed on to local governments that are already facing budget shortfalls. If data is valuable, then resources are needed to support data collection.

Meeting Community Water Needs

There was an observation that meeting the needs of under-served communities will involve a lengthy process to develop sustainable solutions. Several integrated regional water management (IRWM) groups are involved with DAC pilot projects to develop long-term solutions. While these case studies are unfolding, there are immediate needs that must be addressed. It was noted that the challenge is to find ways to assist communities, on a short-term basis. The State does not have approved models for interim measures and solutions are needed.

It was suggested that the work of other groups should be considered. Water for People is a nonprofit organization that works around the world and may be a source for thinking about new technologies that could assist DACs. Another approach is to look at incorporating DAC priorities into local and regional efforts, including development of regional systems that help multiple communities. Sometimes single systems are the most sustainable.



ACTION ITEM: Ask the Technology Caucus for suggestions on technology that is available at the right scale to help meet community water needs. Are there short-term options that can be implemented while developing long-term solutions?

Other Planning Processes

It was noted that cities and counties receive funding to develop hazmat plans. These processes would be good venues for DACs to work with local jurisdictions.

A point was raised regarding institutional challenges for DACs. Specifically, strategies for water management move through agencies and DACs are often outside agencies. It is important to break out the different elements of water management, to see how they relate to DAC-EJ considerations. For example, stormwater management related to water quality, supply and flooding, which has important consequences for communities with high exposure to flood risks. Similarly, water supply encompasses both quantity and reliability. These aspects are often addressed by multiple department or agencies, making it difficult to track the cumulative impacts of water decisions on communities.

Progress Report

Megan Fidell, DWR, Progress Report Lead, began her presentation by explaining that the Progress Report is designed to determine whether Water Plan recommendations are being implemented. As a result, its release is counter-cycled to that of the Water Plan to provide a mid-course assessment. This is a new initiative that was launched last summer. Initial activities included looking at the formats used by other progress reports, as well as considering what elements of the Water Plan should be reported on. Ms. Fidell explained that Update 2009 contained 13 Objectives, with 115 related actions, which serve as the basis of the Progress Report which is target for release in December 2012. Each caucus is being asked to help inform the evaluations.

A worksheet was introduced for assessing the status of actions related to Objective 13, Ensure Equitable Distribution of Benefits. Formatted as a table, the last column provides space for survey responders to describe the basis of their evaluation. For example, is the status response based on considerations of local, regional or statewide activities? Or, is the status response based on one or more particular program(s)?

This information can also be incorporated into the Regional Reports. The goal is to describe some big-picture perspectives about how the State is doing in terms of implementing objectives and related action. Kamyar Guivetchi, DWR, Manager, Division of Statewide Integrated Water Management, remarked that the size and diversity of the State creates a challenge for statewide planning. Many of the implementation actions occur within a regional setting and need to be incorporated into a state-level summary. Lisa Beutler explained that both regional perspectives and caucus perspectives would be helpful. The current status on Update 2009 recommendations will inform the recommendations that are developed for Update 2013.



Discussion

In discussing the evaluation form, it was noted that some actions are easier to evaluate than others. It was suggested that the caucus might help identify some quantitative performance measures and provide some level of assessment. State agencies could be asked to look at the evaluation and describe how different programs relate to implementation of related actions. Each State agency knows some of the things that they've accomplished. No one knows everything about what's been accomplished. It would also be helpful to know if current programs and regulations are working – if not, agencies need to know that and try a different approach. It was suggested that more time be spent on thinking about what should be evaluated.

Another comment was made emphasizing the importance of how information is used. The evaluation should inform efforts at all scales, with the Regional Reports culminating in what needs to be done as a result of this information. It was suggested that the progress report evaluations be sent out to IRWMs.

In terms of evaluating progress, there was a question as to whether it was possible to show the actual projects needed in each DAC identified in the report, along with the funding needed to make it a reality. This would be a potential performance metric for future progress reports.

ACTION ITEM: The facilitation team will convene a conference call to collect feedback for the progress report.

Action Items, Next Steps

The following Action Items were noted:

- Ask the Technology Caucus for suggestions on technology that is available at the right scale to help meet community water needs. Are there short-term options that can be implemented while developing long-term solutions?
- Schedule a conference call to collect feedback for the progress report.
- Consider collecting Progress Report responses from IRWMs.

Attendance

Lisa Bilir, California Public Utilities Commission, Division of Ratepayer Advocates
Dave Bolland, Association of California Water Agencies
Paul Boyer, Self-Help Enterprises
Karen Buhr, California Association of Resource Conservation Districts
Evon Chambers, Planning and Conservation League
Grant Davis, Sonoma County Water Agency
Anisa Divine, Imperial Irrigation District
Aaron Dixon, Susanville Indian Rancheria



Karen Dove, Planning and Conservation League
Mark Drew, CalTrout
Laurel Firestone, Community Water Center
Pal Hegedus, Floodplain Management Association
Jack Hawks, California Water Association
David Kennedy, American Council of Engineering Companies
Maria Kennedy, Inland Empire Environmental Justice Coalition
John Kingsbury, Mountain Counties Water Resources Association
Nick Konovaloff, Regional Council of Rural Counties
Karen McBride, Rural Communities Assistance Corporation
Danny Merkle, California Farm Bureau
Sheri Miller, Rural Communities Assistance Corporation
Donna Miranda-Begay, Tribal Advisory Committee
Vickie Newlin, Butte County Department of Water and Resource Conservation
Eric Osterling, Kings River Conservation District
Tim Parker, Groundwater Resources Association
Wendy Phillips, League of Women Voters of California
Bob Siegfried, Carmel Area Wastewater District
Iovanka Todd, Floodplain Management Association
Bob Wilkinson, UC Santa Barbara
Dan Young, Surfrider Foundation
Nancy Zarenda, California Utilities Diversity Council

Jamie Childress-Byers, CalEMA
Debbie Davis, Governor's Office of Planning and Research
Bruce Gwynne, Department of Conservation
Liz Haven, State Water Boards
Chuck Jachens, US Bureau of Indian Affairs
Gita Kapahi, State Water Boards
Jule Rizzardo, State Water Boards
Cindy Shipley, CalEMA
Kim Wilhelm, CDPH

Jose Alarcon, DWR, Water Quality Lead
Emily Alejandrino, DWR, Tribal Lead
Megan Fidell, DWR, Progress Report Lead
Kamyar Guivetchi, DWR, Manager, Division of Statewide Integrated Water Management
Kristin Honeycutt, DWR, Management Services
Gary Lippner, DWR, Regional Coordinator, North-Central Regional Office
Hoa Ly, DWR, Flood Caucus Team
Paul Massera, DWR, Program Manager, Water Plan
Brian Moniz, DWR, Regional Coordinator, Southern Regional Office
Ernie Taylor, DWR, Regional Coordinator, South-Central Regional Office



Via Webinar:

Holly Alpert, Inyo-Mono IRWM
Troy Boone, County of Santa Cruz
Merita Callaway, California State Association of Counties
David Curtis, West Consultants
Dave Eggerton, El Dorado County Water Agency
Veronica Garibay, California Rural Legal Assistance
Carol Hall, Kleinfelder
Phoebe Seaton, California Rural Legal Assistance
Ron Sprague, California County Planning Commissioners Association

Barbara Cross, DWR, Tribal Liaison
John Headlee, DWR, North-Central Regional Office, Regional Report Team
David Inouye, DWR, Southern Regional Office, Regional Report Team
Vern Knoop, DWR, Southern Regional Office, Regional Report Team
Charlie Kratzer, DWR, IRWM, Regional Planning Branch
Mary Randall, DWR, Regional Coordinator, Northern Regional Office
Monique Wilber, DWR, Research Program Specialist

Facilitation Team: Stephanie Lucero, Tribal Facilitator; Judie Talbot, facilitation support; Center for Collaborative Policy, CSU Sacramento